



**Manchester  
Metropolitan  
University**

---

Bednall, Anthony (2020) 'New for three years, old for three years, fix for another 3 years'. In: Styling Shanghai. Bloomsbury. ISBN 9781350051140

---

**Downloaded from:** <https://e-space.mmu.ac.uk/622132/>

**Version:** Accepted Version

**Publisher:** Bloomsbury

Please cite the published version

<https://e-space.mmu.ac.uk>

## Chapter 9

‘新三年，旧三年，缝缝补补又三年。’

‘New for three years, old for three years, fix for another 3 years.’

Anthony Bednall

### *Clothing Frugality and the Narrative of the Ordinary 1960-1976*

Against the context of a century or more of economic, social and political developments in China, fashion or clothing, has acted as a representational and symbolic illustration of a culture trying to clarify its own existential questions.

Its urban populations, with Shanghai, being historically, the most vibrant, negotiated unparalleled turmoil and seismic societal and economic volatility, which contributed to changes in individual and collective dress codes and represented the birth and rebirth of a series of distinctive cultural and sartorial norms. Shanghai pre-1949 has been described as ‘a beautiful young woman’ and by foreign inhabitants during the 1930’s as the ‘Paris of the Far East” but its continuation as a fashion capital and a consumer city with a multi-national imperial heritage was always going to be ideologically at odds post 1949, when the city was ‘liberated’ by the forces of the New Republic. <sup>1</sup>

Undoubtedly for Shanghai, the powerful historical narrative of the new state replacing and eclipsing any previous localised societal cultures and expunging its ‘imperialist’ past, would come to mean a loss of relevance and its former status as a key metropolis would become overshadowed by the success of the newly established Chinese Communist Party (CCP) regime.<sup>2</sup> It is, however, inconceivable that the population instantaneously dismissed previous social models, lifestyle and aesthetic sentiments which had their roots within a previously well-developed capitalist and bourgeois ethos. <sup>3</sup> Ultimately it is this ‘red narrative’ of regime change, which dissects not only China’s, but Shanghai’s history, into a pre-1949 era and a post-1949 era. <sup>4</sup> There has been a significant amount written around this juxtaposition between the ‘new society’ post 1949, which often makes assumptions of limited linkage or continuity between the two eras. <sup>5</sup> The city’s existing commercial environments and retail spaces continued to trade alongside its mature, light and textile industries, all of which existed within a well-conceived modern infrastructure.

The influences on the city’s population and on how ordinary Shanghai residents

procured, adapted and constructed clothing for themselves and their families could not have been a simple or singular transformation. Garments which were not only functional, economically viable and responded positively to new visual codes and social dogma were also not the direct effect of a series of political campaigns or directives, but would, like the majority of the country be a response to broader narratives of political alliances, global aspirations, revolutionary doctrine heavily reinforced by powerful visual imagery, and in some cases misguided or unsuccessful socio-political policies.

This chapter explores some of these broader narratives during the first decade of the new republic, 1949 to 1959 and their direct contribution to the cultural and sartorial landscape of China in general terms and Shanghai specifically, whereby clothing loses its aesthetic significance to be replaced predominantly by functionality, gender neutrality and asexuality. It also reflects, through personal narratives, how ordinary Shanghainese residents, during the period 1960 to 1976, pragmatically responded to the conditions within this new landscape by navigating situations and ideologies as best they could and resourcefully clothed themselves through a variety of methods and opportunities.

### ***External and internal influences on dress 1949-59.***

There were touchpoints within the first decade of the new regime when there were opportunities and an appetite from the new government to consider how the urban populations of China, such as Shanghai, could develop a stronger sense of dress and style to reflect a positive socio-cultural landscape. However, the complex nature of a fledgling government formulating a new modern China based on Socialist, Marxist and Maoist theories meant that conditions were such that by 1960 Chinese urbanites and the population as a whole had no choice but to consider clothing purely through a functional and utilitarian lens.

In Shanghai, like other cities, this functionality was reflected through resourcefulness, shared community, adaption, economic viability and an individual response to the expectations of egalitarian positioning and social norms.<sup>6</sup> Information with reference to clothing and its relationship to the local population during this period was somewhat limited, as like the majority of China, conditions, initially rooted within a heavy Soviet influence and latterly through centralized strategic domestic and

international policies were such that fashion or clothing was not deemed a priority or a subject worthy of much documentation.

Even if the subject was not high on the political agenda the growing population still required clothing and there was continued and sustained influence, guidance and recommendations, often in the form of posters, from central government as it responded, to internal and external socio-political pressures.

Externally the Soviet influence on China as a political and economic ally, post 1949, was somewhat predictable. China had no real choice but to form an international united front with the Soviet Union and other socialist nations against the United States and Japan.

Mao himself said in 1949 in his famous 'lean-to-one-side statement' that China must:

Externally, unite in a common struggle with those nations of the world which treat us as equal and unite with the peoples of all countries. That is, ally ourselves with the Soviet Union, with the People's Democratic countries, and with the proletariat and the broad masses of the people in all other countries, and form an international united front.... We must lean to one side.<sup>7</sup>

By committing to the 1950 Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance, and Mutual Assistance, China's new leaders, who had no previous experience of running a country, sought to position China globally by consolidating economic and cultural ties with the Soviet Union, and garner its' experience of organising and delivering a socialist society as part of a new world order. <sup>8</sup>

This new alliance, which was intended to substantially support China in achieving its' aims also gave the Soviet Union certain rights. This included land and finance, in return for military support, weapons, and large amounts of economic and technological assistance, including technical advisers and machinery. As an existing manufacturing hub, Shanghai could have been a key area to support the new regime's first five-year plan of industrialization to heavy industry and the move to a Soviet influenced totalitarian narrative of self-reliance and modernization. <sup>9</sup> This did not however transpire as the new government focused away from the city ports embracing a

collaborative Soviet designed centralized system which supported new and heavy mechanization.

### ***Cultural Relativism and Stylistic Adoption.***

Through the Sino-Soviet collaboration there was significant population mobility between the countries with an estimated 80,000 Chinese being allowed to either train or study in the Soviet Union and 20,000 Russians travelling to China as foreign experts to support economic and cultural growth.<sup>10</sup> Scholarship on the historical timeline, economic and ideological relationship forged within the *Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance* has been well documented however where there is less investigation is into the cultural dynamics and social environments of urban populations that were symbiotically influenced by a newly organised, Soviet influenced and politically positioned ruling party.

There can be no underestimation of how, as part of this agreement, between 1950 to 1956 the Soviet Union exerted a strong influence not only on Chinese economics and industry but also on art, education and significantly culture. Russian experts were invited into universities and colleges to teach students. Russian language, Marxism and Leninism were compulsory Chinese school subjects and Russian language skills enhanced individual's social standing.

There is little evidence of what motivated or influenced dress from a population perspective and certainly the CCP did not issue edicts regarding acceptable notions of dress as the nationalists had done previously.<sup>11</sup> The Party did however reiterate the use of the phrase “*pu su*” embedded within directives and slogans to convey a sense of simplicity across all forms of revolutionary idioms and the new government taking its lead from established Soviet art propaganda methods of visual representation of muscular state heroes and radiant heroines, used the power of imagery, across a range of media, to reinforce not only political doctrines but acceptable modes of dress.<sup>12</sup> Ultimately political ideologies were embedded and reinforced across all areas of society through visual communication which supported and redefined the cultural landscape from the individual to the collective.

For men, the transition to the collective is well documented and defined by hierarchical visual association, the abandonment of western styles and an appetite to associate with and stylistically align with newly embraced cultural heroes. The modified

Zhongsam Juang and its less formal version the Zhifu, (Figure 1) both of which shared similarities with the military uniform and the visual codes relating to the cadre, worker, peasant and soldier were clearly sanctioned through all propaganda outlets and were defined enough to position the wearer succinctly within the new ruling party.

### **Insert Figure 1 here**

Women's clothing was somewhat more complex to redefine, as most forms of adornment and outward hints of sexuality did not sit well with revolutionary doctrine. Posters one of the key methods of distributing ideologies showed hyper realistic, ageless, workers, soldiers and peasants with strong and healthy bodies which over time erased gender distinctions.<sup>13</sup> Initially women appropriated what became known as the Lenin suit as a form of status dress, this not only reflected what the early female revolutionary leaders had worn in the early 1940s but also aligned individuals with the new CCP regime outwardly displaying their political allegiance. They also adopted the 'peoples dress', a basic shirt, and trouser, which again symbolically imbued the wearer with empathy for the spirit of revolution. Stylistically these garments led women to abandon traditional attributes of femininity whilst assuming anonymity and through both dystopian and normative scenarios the population in general had an appetite to associate with, and stylistically align itself with influential cultural and political icons. This may have been particularly challenging for Shanghai's urban female population as it transformed itself from the Paris of the East, but commentators at the time illustrate how powerful and quickly the transition to a new visual dynamic occurred. A. C. Scott in his 1958 study of the development of Chinese dress in Shanghai, Beijing and Hong Kong observed this rapid transition at first hand.

almost overnight as it seemed, the nation was garbed in a dress whose sexless regimentation of style and shapelessness symbolized the liberation of a new national spirit according to Marxist theory, although to less politically perceptive eyes it appeared, however utilitarian, unnecessarily drab.<sup>14</sup>

Whilst Noel Barber a long term resident and cultural commentator of Shanghai pre-1949, notes on his return to the city, in the early 1950's that; 'its satellite suburbs

depressingly reflect the Soviet architectural influence, and its people in identical uniforms pad the street like sexless ghosts.’<sup>15</sup>

Inevitably with a pro-soviet political landscape, the influx of soviet cultural media, which quickly displaced banned western counterparts, and the cross- cultural movement of peoples came a filtration of cultural styles and imagery which began to influence the female urban populations of China. As they did previously with the speedy acceptance of the Qipao, Chinese women would begin to admire and desire a gender specific item and the Bulaji dress started to appear as a common female garment.<sup>16</sup> This style of dress had originally become popular as the daily wear of Soviet Union women.<sup>17</sup> Although a simple garment it became iconic when an 18-year-old Soviet heroine, Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya, was executed in 1941, for championing her cause against the Nazis, in just such a dress, defining the garment as a symbol of revolution and progress.<sup>18</sup>

### ***Fashion as Cultural Capital***

If the Sino Soviet Alliance was the foundation of a gradual osmotic adoption of Russian styles of dress in the early 1950's then it could be argued that the events of 1953, propelled this influence forward at a much greater pace and opened up a broader debate around the significance of clothing in relation to global representation and the recognition of a successful socio-political environment. Stalin's death in 1953 as well as the end of the Korean War led to a shift in political visioning and influence.<sup>19</sup> Whereby Stalin advocated cultural imperialism, the new Premier, Khrushchev, was not as opposed to cultural discourse and exchange, opening up a broader dialogue around a more liberal and dynamic future for the USSR developed though socialist internationalism. This view in turn signalled the re-opening of the GLAVNY UNIVERSALNY MAGAZIN or GUM department store in Moscow's Red Square.

The store was built as a commercial arcade in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century and comprised of more than a thousand shops.<sup>20</sup> It closed in 1917 as part of the Revolution, re-opened in 1921 by Lenin and closed with plans for demolition by Stalin in 1930.<sup>21</sup> For unknown reasons, it was not demolished and re-opened on the 23<sup>th</sup> of December 1953. There are clear parallels of the influence, both positively and negatively, of political environments, on notions of commerce and of the role of commercial outlets that had previous existences under differing political parameters. The existing Shanghai department

stores such as the Yongan store and the Shanghai Number 1 Department stores are prime examples, both of which operated with great success in a pre-revolutionary commercial environment and both of which, like the GUM store, ironically survive today as beacons of designer focused experiences albeit within communist controlled environments.

The opening of an 'exemplary' department store in Moscow in 1953 that would offer the best possible goods and commodities was a global statement that GUM by its location to the east of red square would not only become a major attraction but be significant proof of the achievements of Soviet power in the field of trade and of serving the population. In the spring of 1954 the Fashion Atelier opened within the store and positioned itself in the category of "Lux". The highest end possible.<sup>22</sup>

Also in 1954 the Department of Fashion Design was established and although officially a trade organization it had a broader remit which included the design of clothes as well as the propagation of fashion and good taste among the populace. This was enabled through the publishing of fashion magazines and booklets and by organizing regular fashion shows within the demonstration hall at GUM.

There was a team of designers who not only designed menswear, womenswear and accessories but also started to create seasonal collections and 'LUX' as GUM took on the role as the sartorial leader for Russian style. Anastas Mikoyan who was Khrushchev's right hand man fully supported the workings of the Department of Fashion as he understood that fashion, like culture in general was an international phenomenon and he promoted international cooperation in fashion to such an extent that in 1956 a delegation from the Russian ministry of trade including fashion designers from GUM went to Paris for 20 days to study the Paris fashion houses.<sup>23</sup>

The USSR's propaganda machine had become well-honed at sparring with the United States in terms of identifying the cultural richness of the communist ideal through posters, periodicals and films, all of which, as already stated, were prominent in China and became further reference points for political posters and media which reinforced doctrine as well as expectations of clothing. A popular Soviet magazine entitled *Rabotnitsa* (the woman worker) which featured fashion amongst its content declared that:



With the growth of the material well-being of the Soviet people the demand for clothes has also grown [and] the soviet person has become more beautiful, both in mind and soul, so his clothes must also be beautiful.<sup>24</sup>

Whether this was at odds with Mao's vision of China is unclear, but the Chinese leaders were certainly unsettled by Khrushchev's stance towards de-Stalinization and a peaceful coexistence with the West. As the fifties unfolded there was a series of internal conflicts between the communist parties of China and the Soviet Union, particularly around Khrushchev's open criticism of key policies and initiatives. He disparaged the Hundred Flowers Movement, which was a programme designed in 1957 to give intellectuals an arena to submit different ideas opinions and suggestions, often contrary to China Communist Party philosophy. He also denounced the Great Leap Forward which aimed in 1958 to meet China's industrial and agricultural problems by the mass mobilization of the population into communes. These communes typically numbered around 20,000 people and were tasked with producing food, industrial goods and generate surpluses for use and benefit by the state.<sup>25</sup> Khrushchev's and Mao's differing views consequently evolved into open debates, conflicts of inter-party relations and led to the deterioration of state relations and ultimately the end of the Sino-Soviet Alliance in 1960.<sup>26</sup>

Nonetheless the huge political, economic and cultural influence from Russia demonstrated the significance of a populations appearance. The Soviet Union developed a surprisingly sophisticated image of its population, during the mid 1950's, through fashion magazines, film and media. The popularity of Russian visual information therefore further illustrated the gap in style represented by individual socialist regimes.

The Chinese Government was also keenly aware from their Soviet experiences that the outward global image of China as a newly formed political and cultural nation was significant in establishing itself as a serious and contemporary addition to the world's political and cultural community. In reality the Soviet Union had already been through the process of serious debate around clothing as representation, as appropriate for a newly formed modern nation and suitably desirable for happy and fulfilled citizens of a socialist country. As the discussion around style and appearance seems to have gathered momentum there seems to be a deliberate and considered shift in the mid 50's

to re-imagine how the population of China's urban population should also represent itself by encouraging more variety in the type of garments worn. It could be argued that taking a lead from what had developed in Moscow with the re-opening of GUM and other stores like it across major cities, the development of the Atelier and the Department of Design within GUM and other official fashion organisations such as the All Union House of Clothes Fashion Design, (known as ODMO), the Chinese leaders decided to respond in a similar manner and effectively cultivate and develop a broader visual identity for its population. The population itself had already been raising concerns about how it looked and was perceived, through forums which were reported in the media whilst the observations of outside visitors supported these concerns.<sup>27</sup>

practically every foreign visitor who came to China whether for or against the regime, agreed on one point, the dress of the Chinese people was colourless and drab.<sup>28</sup>

To that end in April 1955 the Ministry of Culture, through a forum of leading artists and journalists and in conjunction with the New Observer, launched the Dress Reform Campaign led by Yu Feng.<sup>29</sup> Which set out to encourage the population to 'dress up nicely' (daban piaoliang) and to identify a range of styles that might be considered appropriate stylistically within the context of new China. Like the Soviets this was manifested through publication, the development and production of new fabrics including print and the creation of new styles, which were shown in exhibitions and fashion shows across urban China. The People's Daily consequently reporting on Shanghai and Beijing's upcoming events to both advertise the exhibitions and reflect the CCP's positive endorsement; 'Shanghai will hold a women and children's clothing exhibition in March. The clothing exhibits will be divided into sections for admiring and for practical use.' It also notes that some of the styles will be going to an exhibition in Beijing.<sup>30</sup> 'Fashion Exhibition opens today, there will be 535 pieces of clothing exhibited for men, women's and children and for Spring Summer and Autumn seasons. There will also be a variety of new design of flower (printed) cotton fabric, silk and wool. Already 83,000 people have registered to visit the show.'<sup>31</sup>

If the purpose of the Dress Reform Campaign and the fashion exhibitions was to enhance the appearance of the population and to challenge international perceptions of style, under the Chinese Communist Party, then it could be argued that this was relatively successful. The international press certainly took note and a dedicated article entitled 'Shanghai is revived as a Fashion Capital' appears in the *New York Times* on the eleventh of May 1956 and notes that:

Shanghai, thwarted for some time as the suppressed Paris of China, apparently is outdoing Peiping (Beijing) now that its tailors are being officially encouraged to relieve the grim sartorial picture on the mainland

This flirtation with dress as cultural capital whereby fashion shows were officially organised, and publications, which sat alongside the production of new styles were sanctioned by senior officials does seem to have captured the imagination of the public and given them an appetite to engage with 'fashion' and clothing beyond pure functionality, the People's Daily again noting that by the end of the Peiping (Beijing) exhibition alone some 290,00 persons had visited it.<sup>32</sup>

In reality economic conditions were unfavourable to support dress reform and the drive from the government for rapid industrialization meant that textile output was held down to the minimum necessary to clothe the population in a serviceable fashion.<sup>33</sup> Demand for grain and cotton, therefore, outstripped supply as early as 1953 and 1954, as poor harvests and increased urban populations forced the government to instigate grain rationing in 1953 and the rationing of cotton and cotton cloth in September 1954.

34

Allocation of coupons for cotton cloth were issued yearly and could be used for goods such as readymade clothing, fabric, bedding and sometimes underwear and socks.<sup>35</sup> Individual allocations varied minimally dependent on region and urban or rural location but initial provisions were 12 to 16 Chi per person, one Chi being equivalent to 0.33 metres.<sup>36</sup> This significantly reduced by 1960 and 1961 as the failure of the Great Leap Forward due to well documented mismanagement and drought meant individual allocations came down to as little as 1.6 to 3 Chi per person.<sup>37</sup> The practice of rationing cotton continued until 1983 and as conditions and technologies improved during the 1970's there was some lifting of allocations. In Shanghai queueing up for sugar

reportedly began around the same time as the first issuing of cotton coupons and it is conceivable that against this background and as a response to a failure to expand textile production, that the propaganda of frugality became a common message even before the instigation of the Dress Reform Campaign and was probably the true driver of the diversification of styles. Articles from 1954 had already introduced the population to a more conservative approach to using fabric as well as advising and encouraging them to use a range of existing garments including Qipao and skirts in relation to womenswear as a move away from the blue cloth uniforms habitually worn by all ages and genders. Positive propaganda broadcasts through Peking radio announcing that Chinese women would be wearing brightly coloured flowered print frocks by the spring of 1956 and that fifty-four thousand bales of printed calico had been turned out by Shanghai manufacturers, although illustrating an upturn in production, seems at odds with the broader realities of the times.<sup>38</sup> Hence as the Dress Reform Campaign peters out in late 1956 early 1957, and as a prelude to the beginning of the Great Leap Forward in 1958, real concerns around supply and demand and usage of fabrics for clothing emerged.

### ***Economy, Practicality and Looking Good.***

In October 1957, the Shanghai Cultural Department in conjunction with the Shanghai Government Group (Apparel) produced a pattern-making, clothing construction book showing practical examples of how to re-work and re-model existing garments. The book entitled, 'New Clothes from Old Clothes' sets the true temper of the times in part of its introductory statement;

Lessening resources and raw materials, significant volumes of historic pre-worn and waste garments and inefficient and ineffective ways to recycle garments and fabrics on a commercial scale.<sup>39</sup>

Whether the Cultural Department was under pressure to work with textile companies to produce more fabrics as part of Government targets or whether they took the lead in considering the re-appropriation of old garments is difficult to verify. The Shanghai Government Group (Apparel) had 'acquired' most of the fashion firms built pre-liberation in Shanghai, making it one of the largest state owned garment enterprises

in China and significantly the formal introduction of the publication, roots itself clearly in a contextual position relating to the broader issues of the period.<sup>40</sup>

It states;

After 1949 our production of fabrics and silks increased considerably as did the quality of life and expectations of the people. Increased production of fabric however is not enough alone to meet the people's needs. We should therefore not just increase production to meet demand but look at how we can use and save fabric. One of the important and practical ways to increase fabric saving is to change old clothes into new clothes. It seems such a waste that there are so many large mountains of old clothes that are stored in cases and homes so if we could change old clothes into new clothes we could meaningfully save large amounts of goods (raw materials) for the country and also save spending on fabric.<sup>41</sup>

This certainly seems to contradict some of the values of the dress reform campaign as well as the remit of fashion shows in the Spring of 1956. The book also recognised that there would be differentiation in skill levels and that the makers/tailors would need an exact design and plan to convert clothing accurately in terms of the correct fit, an appropriate style as well as being visually strong.

Within the introduction there is also a short description of two fashion events held in Shanghai in the Spring and Summer of 1957 both of which are noted as being very popular and which introduced the public on how to change old clothes to new clothes and the best ways to save fabric. The book's authors also refer to the 1957 exhibitions as being pivotal in collating information which inspired and informed the final ninety designs included within the publication. They concluded that the individual pieces may not yet have been perfect in terms of technique due to the authors own lack of experience in the development of re-working garments but hope, the public at large would find the publication of use in producing garments that supported the country's values and the individual populations responsibilities.

The pattern book seemed to be identifying styles that the public suggested it wanted to wear and reinforced the notion of frugality whilst contextualising the broader

political issues of sustaining a large population with its basic needs, clothing being one of them. It is probable that the 1957 Shanghai exhibitions were inspired by the popularity of the 1956 fashion shows and that this popularity inspired a format for communicating ideas and engaging the local population in a new debate around clothing which supported a sustainable future, both for the manufacturers and in line with government policy.

What is notable is the question as to whether this was purely a pragmatic exercise in using existing garments, due to a lack of basic resources, or a clear response to the fact that the government were subtly influencing and encouraging a more varied wardrobe from the mid-fifties. Skirts for example use less fabric than trousers, a Qipao less than shirt and trousers.

Whatever the reasoning the designs within the publication do hint at a cosmopolitan influence, all be it one tempered with Chinese characteristics.

The front cover (Figure 2) depicted an urban educated woman in a tailored jacket and skirt possibly holding the writings of Mao. This suggests a powerful and deliberate message of the acceptance of 'style' and of educated urban inhabitants positioned within the accepted political paradigms but which also confirms and reinforces the drive for an economical approach. Included in the styles are Qipao, Swing back three quarter length coats, similarly styled with moderation on Dior's new look as well as the modified Zhongsam Juang and a range of styles all reconstructed from previous garments.

### **Insert Figure 2 here**

As noted the dress reform campaign had disappeared by this point, the Sino-Soviet alliance had started to dissolve and one wonders whether there is a specific cultural attempt to re-affirm styles that confirm and contribute to a modernist Chinese vision. Certainly, for women, the Lenin suit had become less popular and was replaced by cadre clothes, the female version of the man's Zhongsam Juang jacket with a turned down collar and the two chest pockets removed to make it more suitable for women. The Bulaji dress was also less popular and the Qipao appears to be more or less redundant.

A tailor from the Western District Clothing Co-operative from the period stated that:

‘From the early 1950s we had a lot of requests to remodel suits. Back then materials were expensive but labour was cheap, and it only cost a few Yuan to re-fashion a suit. We would advertise this with a sign reading Reconditioning of Western Suits (Fanxiu xifu). Uniforms were recognised as the mark of state employees, to wear one was to be progressive. If you wore a western style suit people thought, you were a capitalist.’<sup>42</sup>

A second publication entitled “How to Use Less Fabric when Cutting Clothing” (translation) produced in Shanghai in early 1958, by the same government office and group reinforced the message further but this time rather than the re-modelling of old clothes to new, the book looked at the most efficient ways to develop a pattern and lay plan for optimum savings.<sup>43</sup> Just a few months on from the first publication, the message in the introduction of this publication is positioned with much more specificity.

The three principles of the role of clothing is economy, practicality and looking good. All of the fabrics whether silk, cotton or suiting are all precious goods of the country and we should not waste them. Since we have developed the idea of managing the country in a saving way and not wasting anything, the problem of how to use the fabric wisely becomes an important consideration for everyone. It is an honour for anyone working with cloth to have the spirit of saving and to use all fabric wisely. In the design of clothes, we should try not to use unnecessary cut or stitch and try the best to use every piece of the fabric, by a pattern lay that reduces fabric usage and waste.<sup>44</sup>

The authors refer back to the previous fabric exhibitions held in Shanghai In April and October 1957 identifying that the most popular element of the exhibition with the public was the new designs which saved fabric through pattern and cut. It is a fair assumption that both books relate to the same exhibitions of 1957 and that this particular area of pattern and lay plan development, as they note themselves, did not, at the time of the shows have enough designs developed in either quantity or quality to constitute the full development of a publication.

This required further development for the publication to be completed with a total of seventy-seven designs featured, identified as being for men, women and children and suitable for all seasons. Once again they stated the book was not perfect and that they

were still working on new designs which fulfil the key principles noted originally. It is difficult to say whether this type of publication could be a solution to the problem of clothing as practical necessity or cultural compliance. Certainly, the agenda for frugality had been set both nationally and locally for a number of years. The Soviet influence through cultural relativism, expertise and knowledge exchange had ended and China's own strategic policies had become prominent societal drivers which in turn reflected stylistically on dress throughout the population. The view from external viewers remains somewhat disdainful, irrespective of the positive attempts to engage communities such as Shanghai with a discourse around sustaining resources. The British Consulate-General in Shanghai for example commenting on the fashion events of 1957:

A ladies' fashion show was opened on April 1. The dresses exhibited showed a sad falling away from the standard that at one time earned for Shanghai the title of the "Paris of the Far East". Still, they were certainly better than the sort of thing that is generally worn around the streets these days.<sup>45</sup>

In hindsight China was probably not fully prepared to exist independently post 1949. For a fledgling government to oversee a vast and diverse country as it embarked on a philosophical doctrine and series of initiatives aimed to transform China economically in record time, was inevitably going to prove problematic. One of the main initiatives, the development of communes to operationalize the Great Leap Forward of 1958 with its twin slogans of "Politics in Charge" and "Walking on two legs" meant a shift of emphasis to a rural and agricultural system. As the decade ends Beijing released a design and pattern making book which is in stark contrast to the ones produced two years previously in Shanghai. Entitled "New Design of Labour Clothes and Kids Wear Cutting Book" and produced by The Beijing Light Industry Apparel Institute, it is a celebration of the labourer, the farmer, and the worker.<sup>46</sup> Embracing powerful visual imagery of contented people working for the good of the nation, it was beautifully illustrated (Figure 3), printed in colour and whilst still ensuring that consideration of economy of resource was reinforced there was a positive and uplifting sense of a common identity. It is no coincidence, of course, that by early 1959, 700 million people had been placed into 26,578 communes and were struggling to meet production targets.



The styles are utilitarian, stripped back even from the Shanghai designs, no skirts, no Qipao and with a huge number of the population working in communes the focus shifted to appropriate clothing for rural and working environments as opposed to purely urban environments. The cover itself was the antithesis of the relatively stylish, educated urbanite on the cover of 'New Clothes from Old Clothes', with any reference to styles appropriate to a contemporary landscape replaced by a seemingly contented farm girl and a lay plan identifying an efficient use of fabric.

### **Insert Figure 3**

Ironically and in an alternative socialist setting over 5 nights in 1959 the GUM store in Red Square hosted a Christian Dior Fashion show exhibiting Yves St Laurent's functional reimagining of the original Dior 'new' look.

### ***Shanghai in Context 1960***

Without doubt by 1960 and post the great leap forward conditions across China were incredibly harsh a CIA report in 1961 drew a number of conclusions:

Although firm information is lacking, non-food crops also experienced a poor year in 1960. The important cotton crop is estimated to have been less than in 1959, temporarily halting growth in the textile industry and bringing on even stricter rationing of cotton cloth. And: the Chinese communist regime is now facing the most serious economic difficulties it has confronted since it consolidated its power over mainland China. As a result of mismanagement and especially of two years of unfavourable weather, food production in 1960 was little if any larger than in 1957 at which time there were about 50 million fewer Chinese to feed. The dislocation caused by the Leap Forward and the removal of Soviet technicians have disrupted China's industrial programme. If Soviet technicians in large numbers do not return, industrial production is likely to increase about 12% annually as compared with 33% in 1959 and 16% in 1960.<sup>47</sup>

As an American report, there may well have been some bias, however it is a clear observation that agriculture had been given a higher priority with a dropping of the Great Leap Forward approach to industry in response to severe shortages in resources.

This combined with the implementation of extensive rationing, including ration coupons for all textile products, even lengths of sewing thread, clothing, although essential, was not of significant importance on the social or political agenda in the early years of the 1960's. All across China garments were referred to as 'New for three years, old for three years, fix for another 3 years.' and the propaganda of frugality became a common message. In turn the population had no other choice but to repair re-use and re make not only from existing garments but through a resourceful and pragmatic approach to the system of rations and fabric availability.

Irrespective of how a government perceives a nation should represent itself to the outside world, there is a compelling argument to say that the population themselves made the final choices in what to wear during the first years of 'New China'. The semiotics of status, a sense of belonging and a visual affiliation to a political ideology are powerful narratives which the population embraced. Clothes were modified, personalized, made and re-made and there is some evidence from individual interviews and personal memoirs of the development of individuality in response to even the harshest of conditions. The invention of small tokens of decoration, the slight changing of details in cut and shape, although modest and barely noticeable to an outside viewer, convey a sense that even within a powerful regime there were nonetheless emotions and desirability attached to clothing and lifestyle accessories albeit on an extremely modest scale. Shanghai's history as a metropolis might have been disabled and eclipsed historically by the powerful notion of 'the state' however the metropolitan experience continued through the initial years of the newly founded republic. From 1949–1978, with 1% of the population in China, Shanghai contributed 16.7% of the national fiscal income and 10% of industrial output. By 1960, however, the city, like many others in China, was low on resources, suffering from a lack of investment and in an environment of overt, and often positively framed propaganda. It is only through the population's individual recollections that the impact of the previously noted centralised policies and the resulting effect of limited resources on daily life, can be graphically illustrated. With this in mind a number of interviews of present Shanghai residents who could recall everyday life between 1960 and 1976 were undertaken to directly inform this section of the chapter. Accepting that the experience of wearing specific items of clothing is central to the formation of an understanding of the self within both the wider world and the local community, these oral testimonies and memories enable an appreciation of the

nuance of garments and individual environments outside of the traditional fashion related historical methodologies.<sup>48</sup> They also illustrate individual and contextual responses to the issues surrounding clothing and lifestyle whilst evoking social experiences and a privileged glimpse into the 'ordinariness' of the day. The emphasis on first-hand experiences, particularly in relation to emotive objects such as clothing, can be problematic due to the accuracy of memories, they do however reflect the way lives are remembered and made meaningful. In this particular situation, during a period of extreme propaganda and fluctuating political agendas, individual oral narratives supply a powerful reflection of daily routines and encounters. The Shanghai residents who recount their narratives offered similar but nuanced experiences that articulate a personalised representation of the time.

Jie Li's detailed account of family life in Shanghai over a number of decades during this period barely touches on her family's relationship with clothing, she does recognise however that a generation of women her grandmother's age 'imprinted their needlework on every piece of fabric worn by their families, as most people wore handmade clothes and shoes from the 1950's to the late 1970's, often treating them with greater care than their own bodies.'<sup>49</sup>

The following interviews, therefore, present a description of the period, the context of the conditions, the relationship and importance of clothing across differing ages and maturities and the pragmatism employed to ensure individual and family needs were met as lack of resources, continued rationing of cloth and thread and pragmatism was a necessity.

### ***Haircuts, School and a Three Pocket Jacket.***

Yuming Lu born in 1947, not uncommonly from a large group of siblings was the eldest of 6 brothers.<sup>50</sup> Residing in Tilanqiao St in the Hongque district of Shanghai he recalls attending school during the early 1960's with a powerful memory of what he referred to as 'The Great Disaster'.

In my school lunch hour we went home from school and all the family had to eat was rice with a lot of water. There was so much water that we wanted to go to the toilet very soon so all the kids tried desperately to hold it in as long as possible so that they would not feel hungry at school in the afternoon.

None of my school friends wore clothes without patches we all had one outfit which we wore every day. Even our school bags were covered in patched fixings but in primary school in the late fifties my friend had a leather school bag. It was an old bag maybe from his father or grandfather but I remember it very clearly, it was like looking at gold and all of my classmates were really jealous of that leather bag.

When I was in senior school I managed to get a bicycle, and travelled 2km to school every day. This daily journey on my bicycle was very special to me, it was like I was flying a plane, I felt speed and independence and I could see that people looked at me, admiringly, and that were very jealous of my bicycle as there were just not many bicycles around at the time.<sup>51</sup>

As a schoolboy, it is clear that he placed little importance on clothing, as food was the highest issue on his agenda, something he kept reiterating throughout the discussions. He was convinced that the reason why there was nothing to buy in Shanghai was directly as a result of the split with the USSR which he felt impacted significantly on the supply of even basic produce and materials. Intriguingly human emotions such as jealousy and admiration seemingly continue to have a place even within an egalitarian society. He like all the residents interviewed, commented on the aspiration to own 'three rounds and sound' (Sanshengyixiang) a wristwatch, bicycle, sewing machine and radio, symbols of modernization and to a certain extent success.<sup>52</sup>

He describes going to the local barber shops to get his hair cut. There was one style for men and boys, irrespective of age, and one price, 8 Fen which equates to around 8 pence in the UK or 11 cents in the US. He does however remember just before the cultural revolution some fashionable young men in Shanghai had a quiff style haircut rather than the tidy short style of the majority but they were considered 'bad people', basically hanging around on street corners, maybe cheating people and with no education. He recalls these types of characters quickly disappeared as the political climate changed during the Cultural Revolution. For women's clothing and styling at the time he was very specific, noting that he could not recall young girls wearing bright prints and that this was, in his view, pure party propaganda. In terms of styling he recalled that no women wore any make up, as this represented capitalism and no women curled their hair as, if they did, they were considered to be prostitutes.

Attending a good secondary school and at the age of sixteen he faced three choices, he could go to work, or go on to high school, or go to a training school. At the time, only the best students went to the training school and he managed to get a place at a school that supported the training of engineers and this was his dream. Disappointingly he did not achieve his dream and in 1968 started work in a factory, making electrical adapters and valves. As a worker however he had significant kudos and would stay in Shanghai rather than being sent to the countryside.

When I started my first job my Aunty was a skilled seamstress and she made me a new outfit which was a three-pocket jacket called a Qingnian Zhung (Youth Jacket). This was made of an open weave cotton called Labour Fabric (Laodong) and people felt this was a slightly younger looking version than other styles.<sup>53</sup> I was issued with a worker's outfit of blue overalls but I was only allowed to wear them at work and not for daily life. It was so rare to get new clothes that I was very precious of the clothes I had and looked after them very well. Since the workers' overalls was never cleaned I protected my own clothes by changing at work and managed to keep a shirt in reasonably good condition for 5 years.<sup>54</sup>

His opinion around clothes is consistently pragmatic throughout the period with limited demand for style just a requirement for warmth. He maintains that most clothes were handmade with many people making copy uniforms and adding cachet to the clothing by acquiring original military buttons to use on them.

When asked about the decisions around clothing and whether there were pressures to conform stylistically he pointedly stated that everyone (male) wanted to be the same as everybody else, they did not want to stand out or be different from other people. So, for him personally he did not really care what he looked like as long as he looked as similar as possible to everybody else and that way he would get no trouble.

### ***Escalators, Knitting and a Sense of Community.***

Another resident Shuzhen Zhang, born in Shanghai in 1954, the eldest girl and the second eldest of seven siblings, five boys and two girls lived on Henanzhong Lu

Lilong 3. The Lilong were neighbourhoods of lanes populated by housing in differing styles that had developed from the mid nineteenth century. This particular Lilong is located in the centre of Shanghai close to Nanjing Lu and members of Mrs Wang's family still live there. She has strong recollections of Nanjing Lu which was and still is the busiest commercial high street in Shanghai.

There were large department stores in Nanjing Lu that had been there for many years including The YongAn department store and the Shanghai Number 1 Department Store. All the stores had the same products and all were the same price in general there were limited items. I remember when I was young going into the Shanghai Number 1 Department store not to buy anything but just to ride the escalator for fun.<sup>55</sup>

It was like being in a spaceship to us, like a playground ride. There were also famous fabric stores in Nanjing Lu, one was called Baodaxiang and the other Xiedaxing.

There you could get common fabrics and very rarely more higher quality(fancy) fabrics. There was also some slightly better quality fabrics where the officials would go to get garments made that were more formal Of course all the fabrics were purchased using your individual coupon allowance. <sup>56</sup>

A poster created by Chen Fei in July 1955 (Figure 4) of the ground floor of the Shanghai No. 1 Department Store clearly shows the escalator located in a central position within the ground floor. It is a powerful view of consumers engaging with purchasing, western styles are still prevalent as are the peoples dress and Bulaji garments which co-exist in a warm and vibrant environment of colour and community. This may well have been representative, notwithstanding the exaggeration of the early years of the new republic in Shanghai, when production was up, but some years later the oral narratives of the residents clearly define a much more understated and less visually flamboyant environment. Populated only by local customers, with limited goods, all of which were sold in similar retail outlets and priced the same with insufficient ration coupons to support needs.

Shuzhen Zhang says:

For fabric, you could get 4.5 feet per person per year, this fabric was for clothes, curtains, bedding, sheets, pillows everything. In reality no family had enough fabric so all the neighbours worked together and shared the coupons. One year the families would pull together so that one family could get enough fabric for winter coats. The next year coupons would be shared so a family could get bedding and curtains and so on and so on. We knew resources were limited and we were all in the same situation with the same incomes so local sharing and responding to families who needed added to our sense of comradeship and community.

As in common with other interviewees she recalls that the majority of clothes throughout this period were handmade and this included shoes, underwear and socks. Within the Lilong community she remembers there were workers/tailors who could not find jobs who would make small amounts of money making garments for residents within the community. There were also hairdressers and local embroiderers who sometimes took on factory work helping to complete orders for pillow cases and table cloths. She talked fondly about knitting:

People knitted for themselves a lot it was popular amongst the communities and we learnt from each other. Some people were more inventive than others and they shared and inspired us with different techniques. I would unpick the yarn from old jumpers and then mix this with the cotton thread that we used for stitching shoes together to remake a new double yarn to knit with. I would also construct yarn from old fabrics by tearing them into fine strips then twist them together to make new yarns for knitting.<sup>57</sup>

The image of her wearing a knitted top (figure 5) made this way was taken in 1974 and is a picture of her on her first day at work. Not only had she knitted the jumper she, but she also, made the shirt obtaining some small lace from the community embroidery workers, which she then added to edge of the shirt collar. She has strong recollections of her manager (lingdao) telling her to remove the lace as it was far too fancy and not revolutionary enough. As a young woman starting at work this minor modification of clothing and personalization is put into perspective by the works manager, who would

have been the local official representative ensuring adherence to centralized codes of practice.

### **Insert Figure 5 here**

Zhang recalls it being extremely rare for anyone to buy new clothes and she recollects with fondness being given a new bright red, western style coat for her 10<sup>th</sup> birthday by her Aunt. This would have been in 1964 just at the point when there was a brief respite from severe hardship. From 1962, when production increased and the party leaders took a more pragmatic and somewhat commercial approach to the over-arching Communist philosophies, rationing was relaxed and urban areas such as Shanghai started producing and trading in greater volumes adding to the choices available in fabrics and products.<sup>58</sup>

### ***The Story of the Shoe.***

All of the Shanghai residents interviewed commented on the making buying, wearing and owning of shoes. Leather shoes were really rare; families could only buy one pair of shoes a year through the coupon ration system. They all described the most popular leather shoe of the time which was called the 765 shoe.<sup>59</sup> This was due to its price which was 7.65 RMB no matter whether it was ladies or men's shoes the price was the same. This was a cheaper version of the 18 RMB ox/cow leather shoe, it was the same style but made of pig leather. The 765 was more popular and resilient because it had a rubber sole as opposed to leather making it cheaper but pragmatically more hard wearing. Normally the majority of people made shoes themselves you could buy the soles and buy the fabric, buy the thread and stitch up the shoes themselves.

Another resident Meijuan Wang recalls going to a shop next to Zhongshan Park in Shanghai where you could buy paper patterns for shoes. Normally, Shuzhen Zhang recalls, the patterns for shoes were lent and drawn around. There was a shoemaker who carried their tools around the street. You could stop him and ask him to make complete shoes, or to sole the ones you had made yourself with rubber. His technique was more professional than the home-made shoes with expertise in hiding the stitching inside and under the shoe as opposed to externally visible stitching. He also carried a range of shoe lasts for different foot size fittings as well as slight stylistic variations, a



strap across for ladies' shoes and some elastic to pull in the top and front. Again, minor variations which allowed for a selection process to take place and the option however minimal to take individual ownership. Hence shoes seem to have taken on a key role and a sense of importance within the fashion systems of the time.

Shuzhen Zhang recalls going on a day trip with her family:

My father took all of us children to the Park for a day. He had worked out how much the bus prices were and how far the family could travel by bus and how far we then had to walk to get to the park. My brothers and sisters cared very much about our shoes so we took them off and walked barefoot until we got to the park to protect them.

She has strong recollections throughout this period that every piece of clothing had to last as long as possible. For the younger children, the clothes were passed down, then added to, either lengthened through the sleeve and the hem. If any new clothes were made they already had longer hems built into the structure of the garments in order to prolong usage. In line with other interviewees she doesn't remember seeing any children without patches on their clothes or hem extensions in different fabrics, she doesn't recall ever wearing until she bought some for her first day at work but remembers knitting and fixing socks continually.

She also has no recollection of anyone wearing make-up. Many young girls had plaited hair and elder women had short hair bobbed either with a fringe or not. During the Chinese New Year celebrations as a minor concession young girls and students were allowed to make a red bow out of plastic string as decoration for the new year on the end of their plaits, but this was allowed only for young girls absolutely not adults. Shuzhen Zhang describes a second-hand outdoor market in Nanjing Lu. She recalls her two brothers going there to buy some better-quality shoes. Like many young men of the time they were sent to the countryside to work, not knowing when they would be returning to Shanghai.<sup>60</sup>

We went to the outdoor second hand market in Nanjing Lu to get some shoes for my brothers. Unlike the stores there was no quotas and you could buy a much

broader range of products. My brothers bought a pair of ex-military plimsolls I remember they were 8 Mao a pair less than 1RMB.

Meijuan Wang was once again from a large family, one of 6 sisters and brothers, she was the third in line and is consistent with the population growth and political encouragement to do so, which in turn imposes further demands on a range of issues around resourcing. Born in 1954 and living on Changning St in the 396 Lilong within the Changning District of Shanghai. Her narrative around clothing is somewhat nuanced as she recalls the family having their clothes both made and bought from shops. She remembers the children all getting new clothes every year on the Chinese New Year and how excited they were at this prospect. This seemed to be at odds with other versions of the accounts of children's clothing acquisition and she elaborated on how the siblings all received new clothes every year.<sup>61</sup>

My mother worked in a shoe factory in Shanghai before the revolution (1949). She moved from the countryside to the city becoming a factory worker. Not long after she secured work my father went to join her in Shanghai also taking on a role in a factory. After 1949 they continued working in the factory and gained greater status as workers which meant they both had salaries allowing them to buy new clothes for us every year. <sup>62</sup> Most of the clothes we had through the early 1960s were made by tailors my mother would buy fabrics then the tailors would stay in our house for a few days and make clothes for us all. This sounds like it would be expensive but it was not as we offered the tailors food and a place to live for a short time. Also, we never used our fabric allowance for curtains, only for clothes."

Significant garments are clearly retained through early memories, not only as desirable objects but also as powerful visual statements Wang recalls a particular Pink top made of corduroy, that was in a Western style, that she wore at nursery for Spring and Autumn, she also distinctly remembers as a nine-year-old (1963), queuing with her mother to buy her very first pair of nylon socks at a store in Caojiadu Lu, which was another local high street with smaller shops than Nanjing Lu. These socks were a new innovation as they had stretch as opposed to a fixed cotton non-stretch fabric.

When she was 17 she got her first job in a factory making parts for textile machines. She wore dungarees which were provided but had to wear her own shirt. For the first 3 years, she got an apprentice wage of 17.83 RMB per month for the first year then in the second year the salary increased to 19.83 RMB per month and finally after 3 years she was on a full salary of 36 RMB per month which she remembers having for at least the next 4 years. She notes this salary was not unusual as most of the 'working classes', this included office workers, doctors, accountants, all received the same salary with only extraordinary workers getting 41 or 43 RMB per month.

Your first day at work was always an event and you planned what to do with your first salary. In 1971 when I first started work I still needed coupons but I remember buying a pair of Ox leather shoes and some fabric for my mother to make a short sleeve shirt. This was very important to me as it was the first gift I had ever given to her.

She recalls buying fabric from the fabric store, where the tailors would work out how much fabric you needed for your size. They would then cut the pattern out for you and you would take it away and sew it yourself, which made the process more economical. She still has some fabric cut but not made into garments.

### ***The Narratives in Context***

Shanghai's character changed from a cosmopolitan consumer based city of the 1930's to a socialist producer city defined by a centralized devised economy in the 1950's. Its population had no choice but to respond to the external and internal factors which came to define the second and third decade of the Peoples Republic of China, with the 1960's represented by, firstly, severe economic hardship and secondly, by violent upheaval in the form of the Cultural Revolution.<sup>63</sup> The 1970's saw the revolution normalised and routine processes involving political study, demonstrations of revolutionary faith and vigilance against counter revolutionary influence combined with the relative 'ordinariness' of work and school. <sup>64</sup> The oral narratives of the residents identify similar approaches to the environments that they lived in, as well as subtle changes in the making and acquisition of clothing. There is a consistent sense of excitement, as often occurs with young children when they are given gifts which are representative of a

special occasion. The natural human instincts of minor jealousies and of the emotions of personal possessions and aspiration still occur as the population moves into the teenage years and a sense of the pragmatic with minor individual nuances prevails with the interviewees as they prepare or begin to engage with work. Ultimately this complex and commodity poor economic period in Shanghai illustrated through these selected memoirs will be recognised by many who lived through the period. However, it might be an opportunity to further bring into question the perceived dreariness of the clothing of the time and the generalisations of commentators whose initial view is of a homogenous sartorial landscape. <sup>65</sup>

What becomes apparent through conversation with the Shanghai residents who lived through this period, is that they managed to successfully procure and adapt clothing for themselves and their families in a difficult economic and political environment. They also maintained a response to the expectations of visual codes and by modification and personalization, individuality, no matter how discreet, managed to find its role even in the harshest of conditions.

Meijuan Wang reflecting on her and her peer's relationship to clothing in the early 1970's illustrates this beautifully.

Us young girls would learn how to make things so we could make minor alterations to customise the clothes. Maybe just a little lower on the neckline or the collar a little longer or shorter, but of course within acceptable parameters. We would wear coloured shirts in summer, normally one colour, light blue, or pale pink. Occasionally flowered pattern shirts but only with very small and discreet flower patterning.

There was a definite line not to cross, but this was not prescribed or written down anywhere, but we all knew what it was.

---

<sup>1</sup> Leo Ou-fan Lee, *Shanghai Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930 - 1945* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999) 331-32. The full quote is 'Shanghai changed from 1949 to 79 as a vision from a beautiful young lady into a middle-aged, coarse woman'

<sup>2</sup> Kerrie MacPherson, *Shanghai History. Back to the future*. (Harvard Asia Pacific Review, Harvard University, Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations. 2002) 39.

<sup>3</sup> Jishun Zhang, *Shanghai around 1949: Continuity or Rupture?* (Journal of Modern Chinese History, Volume 10, Number 1, Routledge 2016) 100-105.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> *The Chinese Historical Review Volume 12*, (Chinese Historians in the United States, 2005) 122

<sup>6</sup> Jie Li, *Shanghai Homes, Palimpsests of Private Life*. (Columbia University Press 2015) Jie Li discusses at length the local changes in the residents of the Lilongs as part of a community in new collective spaces.

<sup>7</sup> Mao Zedong, "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship," 30 June 1949, *Mao Zedong xuanji* (Selected Works on Mao Zedong), (Beijing: The People's Press, 1965) P 1477.

<sup>8</sup> *The Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance between the Peoples Republic of China and the Soviet Union, February 1950*. (CIA Report and translation, Approved for release 30/08/2000).

<sup>9</sup> Xu Jianguo, *Shanghai Industries* (Cengage 2008) 3-6.

<sup>10</sup> Chen Jian, *The Sino-Soviet Alliance and Chinas Entry into the Korean War* (Working Paper No. 1 Cold War International History Project Washington 1992)

<sup>11</sup> Liao Jun, Xu Xing. *100 Years of Chinese Costume*. (Shanghai Cultural Publications 2009) 80.

<sup>12</sup> Verity Wilson, *Dress and the Cultural Revolution* (from: China Chic; East meets West, V. Steele & J.S. Major, Yale University press, 1999) 172, 178.

<sup>13</sup> Stefan Landsberger; *The Rise and fall of the Chinese Propaganda Poster* (Chinese Propaganda Posters. Taschen 2003) 19.

<sup>14</sup> A.C. Scott, *Chinese Costume in Transition* (Donald Moore, Singapore 1958) 92.

<sup>15</sup> Noel Barber, *The Fall of Shanghai*, (Macmillan 1979) 223.

---

<sup>16</sup> Antonio Finnane, *Changing Clothes in China* (Hurst, 2007) 151., Cheng Fangwu in an article on Shanghai fashion in 1926 commented that;  
“Even in Hunan province slender young women were sweeping up and down the streets wearing Qipao’s, a style that had spread more quickly than any intellectual trend.”

<sup>17</sup> Mark Gamsa, *The Cultural and the Social in Chinese–Russian Relations*, (Cultural and Social History 2012, Volume 9, Issue 3) 398.

<sup>18</sup> Yan Li. *In Search of a Socialist Modernity: the Chinese Introduction of Soviet Culture* (Northeastern University Boston, 2012) P148. The image of Russian heroine Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya an 18-year-old martyr whose story was recorded in books and made into a film named Zoya in 1944 in a flowery bulaji, made the dress a symbol of revolution and political progressiveness in China.

<sup>19</sup> XIAOMING, Zhang. *China, the Soviet Union, and the Korean War: (From an Abortive Air War Plan to a Wartime Relationship*, The **Journal of Conflict Studies**, August 2002.)

<sup>20</sup> Olga Vainshtein, Charles Rougle, trans. "Mapping Moscow Fashion: Spaces and Spectacles of Consumption." (*Fashion's World Cities*. Ed. Christopher Breward and David Gilbert. Oxford: Berg, 2006.) 145

<sup>21</sup> Natalya Lomykina, *Mysteries of GUM: Stalin's Tears, Secret Chanel Suits and Gagarin's pass* (RBK Daily, Aug 01, 2015)

<sup>22</sup> Gronow, V. J., Zhuravlev, S. *Fashion meets Socialism*, (Broschiert 2015). 135

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. 141

<sup>24</sup> Lynne Atwood, *Creating the New Soviet Woman, Woman's Magazines as Engineers of Female Identity 1922-1953*, The Stalin Era (Macmillan1999) 164.

<sup>25</sup> Geoff Stewart, *China 1900-1976* (Heinemann 2006) 114-118

<sup>26</sup> Shen Zhihua, *the Great leap forward, the people's communes and the rupture of the Sino-Soviet Alliance*, (Parallel History Project on NATO the Warsaw Pact and the Cold War History of Sino-Soviet Relations) June 2005

<sup>27</sup> “New Democracy Youth League Central Committee and All-China Women's Federation hold a forum: Discussing some questions on improving clothing styles and colours” (People's Daily Article, 02/02/1956)

<sup>28</sup> A.C. Scott, *Chinese Costume in Transition* (Donald Moore, Singapore 1958) 97

<sup>29</sup> Antonio Finnane, *Changing Clothes in China: Fashion, History, Nation*. (Hurst 2007) 210-223

---

<sup>30</sup> *The People's Daily Article*, 25/02/1956

<sup>31</sup> *The People's Daily Article*, 31/03/1956

<sup>32</sup> *The People's Daily Article*, 21/05/1956. (Translated) By the end of the 'clothing exhibition' on 20 May 1956, around 290,000 persons had attended it, while the China Cotton, Yarn and Cloth Company reported that it had sold around 54,000 metres of clothing material.

<sup>33</sup> C.I.A Intelligence Document, *Communist China: Threadbare Outlook for Cotton Textiles* (C.I.A. report no 46, 1971)

<sup>34</sup> Ralph. Huenemann, *Urban rationing in China*. (The China Quarterly No 26 (Apr-Jun 1966) 47-49

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Nai-Ruenn, Walter Galenson, *The Chinese Economy under Maoism: The early years 1949-69* (Routledge 2011 edition) 181-183

<sup>37</sup> Ibid

<sup>38</sup> A.C. Scott, *Chinese Costume in Transition* (Donald Moore, Singapore 1958) 100

<sup>39</sup> 'New Clothes from Old Clothes' (the Shanghai Cultural Department & the Shanghai Apparel Company. 1/10/1957) Translation of overarching introductory statement.

<sup>40</sup> Christine Tsui, *China Fashion, Conversations with designers* (Berg 2009) 18.

<sup>41</sup> 'New Clothes from Old Clothes' (the Shanghai Cultural Department & the Shanghai Apparel Company. 1/10/1957) Full translation of introduction.

<sup>42</sup> Claire Roberts. *Evolution and Revolution, Chinese Dress 1700s-1990*, (Powerhouse Publishing 1998) 46.

<sup>43</sup> Lay plan, the term used in Fashion for placing patterns on fabric to cut the most efficiently and cost effective way. Contemporary factories who manufacture large number of garments often use digital CAD/CAM systems to provide accurate lays.

<sup>44</sup> *How to Use Less Fabric when Cutting Clothing* (The Shanghai Cultural Department & the Shanghai Apparel Group. 1/02/1958). Translation of the introductory statement.

<sup>45</sup> British Consulate-General, Shanghai, 'Shanghai Political Summary', March 23–April 5, No. 5/56, 13/04/1956, in Robert L. Jarman (ed.), *China Political Reports, 1911–1960*, vols. I–XI (Cambridge: Archive Editions, 2001) 224.

<sup>46</sup> *New Design of Labour Clothes and Kids Wear Cutting Book*. (The Beijing Light Industry Apparel Institute 01/06/1959)

<sup>47</sup> Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) The Economic Situation in Communist China, Special National Intelligence Estimate 13-61 (SNIE 13-61, 04/04/1961 released June 2004) 1.3.

---

<sup>48</sup> Jo Turney. *Textiles and Texts: Re-establishing the links between archival and object based research* (Archetype publications 2005) 58-60.

<sup>49</sup> Jie Li, *Shanghai Homes, Palimpsests of Private Life*. (Columbia University Press 2015) 140.

<sup>50</sup> United Nations, Department of Social and Economic Affairs, Population Division: *World population Prospects, the 2010 Revision New York 2011* ([www.unpopulation.org](http://www.unpopulation.org)) Chinas women on average had more than 6 children in the early 1950's. The total fertility rate (TFR) briefly dropped in the late 50's and early 60's as China went through the disaster of the great leap forward one of the largest man-made famine in recorded history.

<sup>51</sup> J.Yifu Lin & D.Tao Yang. *On the Causes of China's Agricultural Crisis and the great leap Famine* (China Economic Review Vol 9 No 2 1998) 125-140.

<sup>52</sup> J. Inch. *Chinas Economic Supertrends*, (InChina 2012) 47.

<sup>53</sup> *Apparel Cutting Handbook*, (Beijing Apparel, Shoes and Hats Industry Group, 1971) 27.

<sup>54</sup> Extracts from Authors Interviews with Yuming Lu. July to September 2017.

<sup>55</sup> Porter Erisman, *The Six Billion Shoppers: The Companies Winning the Global E-Commerce Boom*, ( St Martin's Press , New York. 2017) 33.

<sup>56</sup> Author Interview with Mrs Shuzhen Zhang. Translated and edited from three separate interviews August 5 to September 30<sup>th</sup> 2017.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> "Anton Cheremukhin, Mikhail Golosov, Sergei Guriev, Aleh Tsyvinski. *The Economy of People's Republic of China from 1953* (Yale University Press 2015) 22,23,32. The period of 1962-1966 was a period of recovery from the disaster of the Great Leap Forward. In 1962, the government backtracked by reducing the size of communes to "production teams" of about 20-30 households per team and 20 million workers were sent back from cities to the countryside."

<sup>59</sup> Wang Zhi Qi, *Have you ever owned a pair of 765 leather Shoes?* (translated) (Shangguan, Shanghai Observer 2017)

<sup>60</sup> **Thomas P. Bernstein.** *Up to the Mountains and Down to the Villages: The Transfer of Youth from Urban to Rural China.* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978.) The brothers would have been sent from Shanghai as part of this government policy which began in a limited manner during the Great Leap Forward but accelerated during the Cultural Revolution 1966

<sup>61</sup> Author interviews with Meijuan Wang, October to September 2017.



---

<sup>62</sup> Satya J. Gabriel, *The Structure of a Post-Revolutionary Economic Transformation*, (The Chinese Economy from the 1949 Revolution to the Great Leap Forward, China Essay Series 1998). State-owned and privately owned capitalist firms operated together within the Chinese industrial sector. The workers continued to work as wage labour employees of these firms often with matched pre-1949 salaries.

<sup>63</sup> Nien Cheng, *Life and Death in Shanghai* (Grafton 1987).64-84.

<sup>64</sup> Antonio Finnane. *Changing Clothes in China* (Hurst, 2007) 244.

<sup>65</sup> Tina Mai Chen, *Dressing for the Party: Clothing, Citizenship, and Gender-formation in Mao's China*. (Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body & Culture. 5. 2001) 143-171.